Toronto metro

Your essential daily news | SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2015

2015: THE TIME CAPSULE EDITION

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Your essential daily news
THE TIME CAPSULE EDITION
Saturday, December 26, 2015

Jose Bautista's bat flip in Game 5 of the ALCS punctuated a terrific year for the Blue Jays. The entire country got behind Toronto's team, which made the playoffs for the first time since 1993. CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Toronto sign in Nathan Phillips Square was installed mid-year. Here, it shines blue, white and red in solidarity with the people of Paris, following the horrific events of Nov. 13. COLE BURSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto citizens cheered more than most on Oct. 19 when Justin Trudeau won the federal election and became prime minister. Every riding in the city went Liberal red. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

CULTURAL EVOLUTION

Big things are happening; we record them in this edition

Angela Mullins
Metro | Toronto

METRO'S TIME CAPSULE 2015

SAVE THIS PAPER AND SEND IT OUT TO SEA

Welcome to Metro's Time Capsule. Maybe you're wondering what it is you're holding. Allow me to explain.

This past year, it seemed to us, was a year in which we were on the verge of … something.

We couldn't put our finger on exactly what it was, but change was undeniably in the air. We saw it in our cities, in our country, and in our world. We saw it on our TVs, laptops, and phones. We saw it in Paris, in Ottawa, and south of the border. We saw it in how we talked to and treated each other.

In most cases, the changes are for the better: Think of what the Syrian refugees will do to enrich our culture make our cities more interesting places to live. Think of what the recently signed climate accord could mean. Or, the way a lighted Toronto sign and redevelopment of the waterfront helped bring an often disjointed city together.

Even two negatives took a positive turn this year. There was a big victory in Toronto's battle against police carding, with the province set to ban the practice of random street checks. And, as pieces of concrete crumbled from the Gardiner, a new focus was placed on the expressway, renewing hope that even if it won't be torn down there are options for making it a better fit for our urban landscape.

At times like these the desire to look ahead is matched only by the desire to take stock — to preserve for posterity a world and way of life that won't be entirely familiar to the future.

Hence, our Time Capsule. We've collected artifacts that signify some of the momentous changes — also some of the weird and random changes — that are underway (or imminent) and we've stuffed them into the edition you're holding.

On every page you'll find a story about one of them.

It's our duty as journalists to preserve our moment in time, and we hope it will be your pleasure as readers to marvel at a world that has still yet to become what it will become.

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Finally, there's a tangible way to show your pride at being a Torontonian. Proud citizens gather at Nathan Phillips Square to take selfies with the Toronto sign — erected as part of the 2015 Pan Am Games effort, but standing for much, much more, long after the games have ended.

CONTRIBUTED/ MICHAEL ROBINSON

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SIGN SAYS CITY HAS ARRIVED

HOGTOWN HIGH

Block letters proclaim pride

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

It's tempting to blame it all on Drake.

The man formerly known as Aubrey Graham certainly played a big role in Toronto's 2015 renaissance. The "Hotline Bling" singer exploded this year, rocketing to the upper echelons of the music industry and bringing his hometown along for the ride.

But it wasn't a solo effort. Drake may have given "the Six" a boost but, back in Hogtown, enough of us were working on excellence, so to speak, to capitalize on all that new attention.

Both the Blue Jays and the Raptors had impressive playoff runs this year. The city — and its athletes — flourished during the Pan Am Games.

Toronto-branded clothing flew off the shelves (Nike even made us a shoe).

Selfies taken in front of the TORONTO sign flooded social media.

And Norm Kelly tweeted about all of it.

Taken together, these events had a profound impact on how Torontonians think of themselves and their home. We were used to being a city, but suddenly we became a place. And a place that other cities were talking about.

After years of coping with an inferiority complex, Torontonians were suddenly proud — and we weren't afraid to be loud about it. In the case of Parkdale toques or "Toronto vs. Everybody" T-shirts, we literally wore our pride on our sleeves.

That's perhaps where Drake deserves the most credit. As a genre, hip hop comes with its fair share of braggadocio; you're the best, and your city is too. It's not a typically Canadian sentiment. In fact, tearing down Toronto, not propping it up, is basically a national pastime.

But watching one of the world's most popular performers boast about Toronto made it OK for us to do the same. Not only did we have a lot to brag about this year, but we felt good doing it.

Maybe that's the biggest change of all. It was easy to show everyone else that Toronto is a world-class city. It was harder to admit it ourselves.

INTO THE CAPSULE

THE 'T' IN THE SIGN

Toronto finally stepped up to claim its global-city mantle in 2015. There's no better symbol of the city's new-found pride of place than the popular sign stationed in Nathan Phillips Square.

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Desmond Cole addresses the crowd at the Black Lives Matter protest on July 27, 2015. MELISSA RENWICK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

POLICE GET CALLED OUT FOR CARDING, FEDS TAKE ACTION

Jessica Smith Cross
Metro | Toronto

When Public Safety Minister Yasir Naqvi first announced Ontario was banning carding, some of the activists who had been working hard toward that goal for years remarked that it felt like, finally, the government was actually listening to them.

"The police have been abusing our rights and treating us as criminals in our community and we are finally starting to get some acknowledgment that it is going on," said Desmond Cole at Queen's Park, moments after the announcement.

Cole's account of being frequently carded, "The Skin I'm In: I've been interrogated by police more than 50 times — all because I'm black," published in Toronto Life on April 21, 2015, appears to have marked the issue's tipping point. It galvanized a group of "prominent Torontonians" to pay attention to the damage carding causes Toronto's black, brown and indigenous citizens and to join the chorus speaking up against it — and the government listened.

"The regulation makes it very clear, that police officers cannot stop you to collect your personal information simply based on the way you look or the neighbourhood you live in," Naqvi said, in announcing the carding ban.

But the devil is in the details.

Following the news conference, the lawyers and activists had a chance to study the regulation, and they say there are enough loopholes that police officers won't be effectively prevented from stopping people based on racist assumptions.

For example, Knia Singh of the Osgoode Society against Institutional Injustices said he had been carded 11 times by police, and believes the draft regulation would have prevented only one of those instances.

The province is now finalizing the regulations and they are to come into effect on March 1, 2016. What they look like will likely mean a great deal to the relationship between the province, the police and citizens for years to come.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

INTO THE CAPSULE

A '208w' card

Toronto police officers used these to document citizens in mostly non-criminal encounters. The Ontario government announced in October it was introducing regulations to end the practice of carding.

LOVE OR HATE THE GARDINER

BUMMER: IT'S HERE TO STAY

COMMUTING

I did not get elected to make traffic worse: Tory

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

The debate over the fate of the Gardiner Expressway — whether to replace its eastern stretch with an at-grade boulevard or spend nearly $1 billion to prop up the aging expressway — sparked a massive municipal conversation about the future of transportation in Toronto.

It was also the first real test of Mayor John Tory's leadership, and one he barely passed. The Gardiner may not have changed, but the way Toronto thinks about its iconic elevated highway certainly has.

In June, city council voted 24-21 to spend $900 million to maintain the Gardiner, rather than risk alienating three per cent of downtown drivers by tacking on a few minutes to their commute. It was a narrow, yet crucial, victory for Mayor John Tory, and the culmination of a heated, months-long debate.

Drivers and suburban councillors raised the spectre of "the war on the car," while experts from around the world invoked Jane Jacobs and urged the city to demolish the Gardiner's eastern stretch and replace it with a pedestrian-friendly boulevard.

"It's time to remove the relic of the past and build our city for the future. Not removing the Gardiner East will make Toronto the laughingstock of great global cities," opined Richard Florida, head of the Martin Prosperity Institute at the University of Toronto.

"I did not get elected to make traffic worse," countered Tory.

So, while some pieces may have fallen, the Gardiner remains standing. In fact, the only difference between the Gardiner today and a few years from now will be the location of some on-ramps near Cherry Street.

But like the Spadina Expressway fight before it, the debate around the Gardiner has changed the conversation about transit in Toronto. If nothing else, the tight vote on the issue shows there's less and less political capital to be found in catering to the car. It's possible that by remaining upright, the Gardiner has paved the way for progressive policies like road pricing or the downtown relief subway line.

And now that we're stuck with the Gardiner, Torontonians are displaying a remarkable sense of imagination when it comes to making use of the space below — and even above — the roadway.

Since the council vote, we've seen proposals to add a green roof to the expressway, and a recent philanthropic donation is set to turn a stretch of land underneath the western Gardiner into a sprawling urban park.

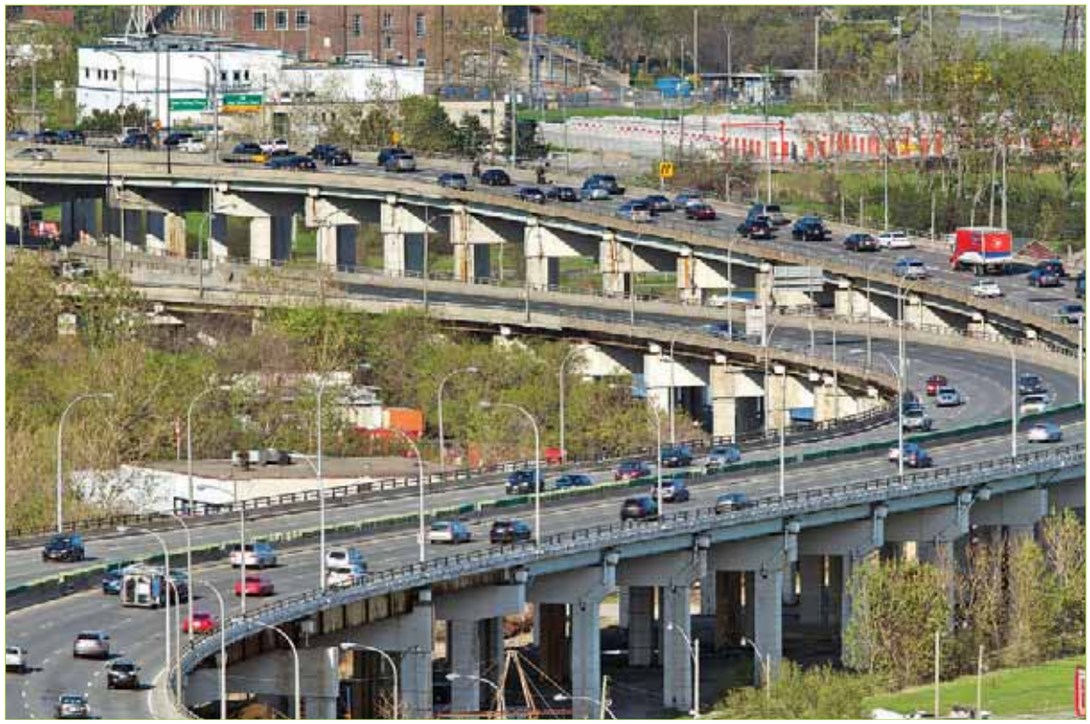
When the Gardiner was completed in 1965, the massive highway in the sky was considered a symbol of progress, proof that every Torontonian could have a job in the city and a big house in the suburbs.

The highway is no less symbolic today, but hopefully what it's showed us is that our idea of progress has changed.

INTO THE CAPSULE

A cement chunk of the Gardiner

Every so often. little and not-so-little pieces of the Gardiner come tumbling to earth, stark reminders of the need to modernize the city. In 2015, we learned the grey behemoth isn't going anywhere any time soon — but also that we won't let it keep us from innovating.



The Gardiner Expressway between Jarvis Street and Carlaw Avenue. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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THE YEAR WE ACTUALLY SAW THE LAKE

TORONTONIANS REMEMBER WE'RE NOT LANDLOCKED

DEVELOPMENT

A look at the waterfront's ongoing facelift

Jessica Smith Cross
Metro | Toronto

For too long, Toronto has seemed like a city with its back to the lake.

Former Waterfront Toronto CEO John Campbell said that over the summer in an interview with Metro.

The goal of waterfront redevelopment, he said, is to turn Toronto into a lake-facing city.

He acknowledged the goal is still a long way off, despite the accomplishments made in 2015.

But for at least a few months this summer, it felt like Toronto turned around — or at least took a peek over its shoulder — and looked out at the lake.

The new Queen's Quay and Waterfront Trail attracts thousands of people, with even greater numbers during the Pan Am Games.

The recreational trail connects the waterfront from east to west, drawing Torontonians from a wide array of neighbourhoods.

It hasn't been a painless change. While popular with runners, cyclists and pedestrians, numerous reports of confused drivers causing crashes along the trail's route suggest an unusual street design made for a difficult adjustment.

Scofflaw cyclists have angered pedestrians and pedestrians often wander out in front of cyclists. At one point, a pedestrian and a cyclist came to blows – of course, it was caught on video (a reminder that 2015 was a hot year for people whipping out smartphones to record, well, everything).

It remains to be seen if these problems will persist.

Campbell left Waterfront Toronto in December. William Fleissig, his successor, will be charged with overseeing the organization's plan for a second phase of redevelopment.

There's a lot of work to do, including building flood protection for the Portlands — which will open up one of the last areas left in Toronto for development but cost nearly $1 billion — and expanding waterfront transit.

Whether or not Waterfront Toronto, the city and upper levels of government can come together for the city's shoreline will be a defining question in coming years.

"When people go to Paris they walk the Champs-Élysées, when they go to Barcelona they walk La Rambla, when people come to Toronto they're going to walk Queen's Quay. It's going to be our signature street, it's going to be that good," Campbell told Metro. "That will help bring the face of Toronto to the lake."

The waterfront trail has had its problems — at one point a pedestrian and a cyclist came to blows. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

INTO THE CAPSULE

A bottle of Lake Ontario water

For too long, it's been said, our city has had its back to its waterfront. The Queen's Quay revitalization and the Waterfront Trial were finished in June, bringing Torontonians and our guests to the waterfront after years of planning and construction.

GOOD IDEA FOR THE FUTURE

Less Ferris, more Zagat

Toronto's waterfront wouldn't need a Ferris wheel to be fantastic: It could be a beautiful place where some people live and work, and others flock to for fun. Is it too pie-in-the-sky to imagine it becoming known for good restaurants and lively bars?

TIMELINE

TORONTO ANIMALS THAT MADE HEADLINES

Fat squirrels

This fall's lingering mild weather gave the city's ubiquitous tree-dwelling rodents more time to gorge on nuts and seeds. The result: some seriously chubby bellies.

Peacock pursuit

A peacock flew the coop from the High Park Zoo in May, escaping capture before finally returning home after a week on the lam. It became a sensation as animal services officers tried to snare it in a net, but failed repeatedly.

Raccoon memorial

The body of a fallen raccoon, cause of death unknown, lay on a downtown sidewalk in July for almost 12 hours, prompting three co-workers to set up a makeshift shrine and tweet a photo tagged #DeadRaccoonTO.

METRO/WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

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MARIJUANA

SEEDING A NEW SYSTEM OF POT SALES, DISTRIBUTION

The federal Liberals promised to legalize recreational marijuana during the 2015 election.

In December, after they took power, they promised in the inaugural throne speech to "legalize, regulate and restrict access to marijuana" to keep it out of the hands of children while also denying criminals the financial profits.

The new government plans to remove possession of small amounts of marijuana from the Criminal Code and create new laws to more severely punish those who provide it to minors or drive while under its influence.

There are dozens of clinics or dispensaries springing up in cities across Canada that sell medicinal marijuana — mainly in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia — and there are referral-only clinics staffed with doctors who assess patients but don't sell pot.

They give patients a prescription to take to a licensed marijuana producer.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau promised to create a task force with representatives from the three levels of government and, with input from experts in public health, substance abuse and policing, to help design a new system of marijuana sales and distribution.

Trudeau stressed the importance of listening to municipal partners, provinces and the medical marijuana industry, as well as drawing on best practices from around the world.

"We are going to get this right in a way that suits Canadians broadly, and specifically in their communities."

Trudeau also said any tax revenues from legal marijuana should go towards addiction treatment, mental health support and education programs — not general revenues.

"It was never about a money-maker," he said.

> **We are going to get this right** in a way that suits Canadians broadly, and specifically in their communities.
> PM Justin Trudeau

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne recently said that provincially owned LCBO stores were "very well-suited" to sell marijuana.

Wynne isn't the only one looking for a socially responsible way to retail marijuana.

The British Columbia Government and Service Employees' Union and the B.C. Private Liquor Store Association joined forces to call for legal marijuana to be sold through their existing retail system, which includes about 200 private and 200 government-run stores.

BCGEU president Stephanie Smith said the union did not take a position on whether it supports the plan to legalize marijuana, "but we do believe that when this happens, it ought to be sold in the most socially responsible way possible, in an age-controlled environment with the strongest track record of checking identification."

Expectations are changing fast in Ontario, which just updated liquor laws to allow the sale of beer in selected grocery stores. Minutes after Wynne made the announcement, she was asked why grocers couldn't sell pot.

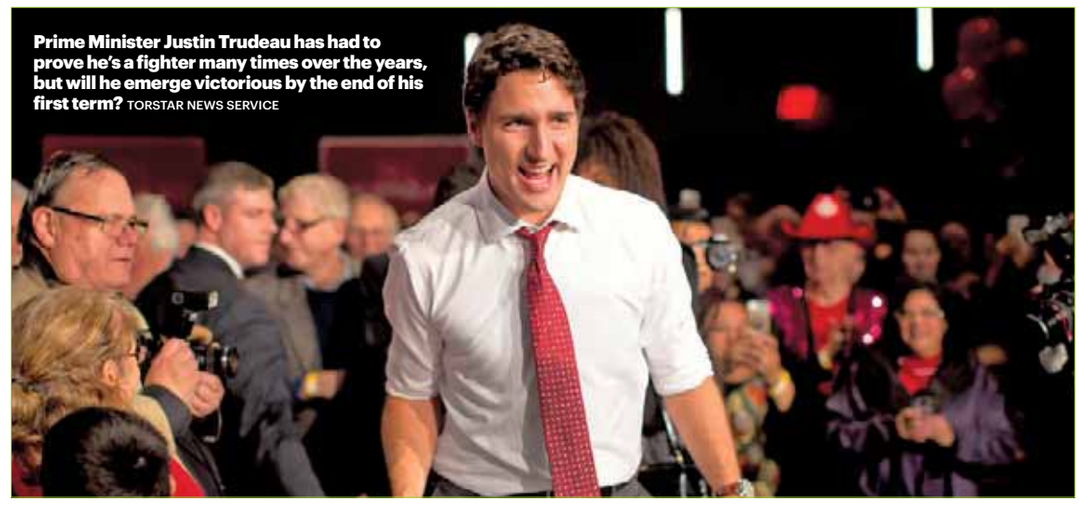
"I don't know what the federal government is going to bring forward, but we will work with them to make sure there are parameters of social responsibility around marijuana."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

INTO THE CAPSULE

A fat spliff

For generations, recreation marijuana use was seen as, if not deviant, at least criminal. The new Liberal government was elected, in part, on a promise to change that.



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has had to prove he's a fighter many times over the years, but will he emerge victorious by the end of his first term? TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

POLITICS

BUDDING BROMANCE

CANADA'S "SUNNY WAYS" LEADER BRIGHTENS RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.

Melissa Dunne
For Metro

When Justin met Barack it was seen as the start of a beautiful bromance.

While former prime minister Stephen Harper and U.S. President Barack Obama always kept things professional, one got the sense their relationship was more a marriage of convenience than a meeting of the souls.

When Obama and newly elected Prime Minister Justin Trudeau held their first news conference in late November one felt like yelling out: "Get a room, already!"

The frosty relations between America and Canada were clearly heating up with Obama, 54, warmly joking that Trudeau would have to start dying his famous brunette mane soon before it started to grey like his own had over the course of his presidency.

In the weeks following the Liberal leader's victory over the Conservative incumbent, much real and virtual ink had been spilled about Trudeau's luxurious locks, his fit physique and beautiful brood. Like Obama early on in his presidency, there was an explosion of stories regarding his DILF-in-chief status. And like Obama, it will be Trudeau's job to get the press and the public to start gushing over his sharp mind instead of his chiselled arms.

He's done it before.

Over his lifetime, Trudeau's many naysayers have often portrayed him as a himbo born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Even glowing Vogue and The New York Times Magazine profiles printed shortly after his election victory both acknowledged his image for many years was that of the "feckless" son of former prime minister Pierre Trudeau.

But, the 44-year-old has proven to be a fighter many times over the years.

During the long 2015 election campaign, Harper tried to dismiss Trudeau as a silly scion who was "just not ready." But, just as he had done in his boxing match with Patrick Brazeau years before, the son of Pierre Trudeau went in as the underdog and emerged as the winner.

In early 2016, Obama was set to take his relationship with Trudeau to the next level by wining and dining him at a state dinner. For Canada's "sunny ways" leader, however, a possible dark cloud lurked on the horizon — the U.S. election. A year into his leadership, Trudeau will have to try to form a new bond with the new president of the United States.

As 2015 wound down it seemed the eventual winner was likely to be either life-long politician Hillary Clinton or the controversy-courting Donald Trump.

It's clear Trudeau will have to prove he can withstand the political punches round after round after round. Will he ultimately have his hand held up in the air in victory, or will he be holding his head in his hands in defeat at the end of his first term? Will he run for re-election and win again like his late father did? The future is not ours to see, but if fils is like père, Trudeau 2.0 will certainly continue to give us something worth watching in 2016 and beyond.

INTO THE CAPSULE

Photo of Trudeau meeting Obama

On Nov. 19, 2015 — after many years of polite, but distant relations — Canada's new prime minister ushered in what many hope will be an era of warmth between the U.S. and Canada as he met with the President Barack Obama for the first time.

GOOD IDEA FOR THE FUTURE

SPONSORING REFUGEES

In 2015, Syria was in the midst of a crisis. An ongoing, years-long civil war, further complicated by the involvement of terrorist groups like the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, had left four million Syrians as refugees.

At the moment, there are a wide array of Canadian groups sponsoring refugees, and many more clamouring to raise money to help resettle the 25,000 Syrian refugees expected by early 2016.

Where the Stephen Harper government was once resistant to refugees, Canada's new administration has thrown open the doors, allowing Syrian refugees to experience all of the freedoms and privileges our nation has to offer.

Hopefully the outpouring of acceptance Canadians are offering to these newcomers will continue.

JILLIAN BELL/FOR METRO

Trudeau greets Syrian refugees at Toronto's Pearson Airport. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Donald Trump addresses supporters at a campaign rally in Michigan. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DONALD TRUMP'S CLOWNING GLORY

U.S. PRESIDENTIAL RACE

From silly punchline to contender

Melissa Dunne
For Metro

In the dog days of Summer 2015 Donald Trump's wrinkled, jowly, aged-spotted head, adorned with his infamous comb-over, landed on the cover of Time magazine. In bold white font were three words: "Deal with it."

Soon after his face and ridiculous hairdo landed on the cover of Rolling Stone. Even The New York Times Magazine put him on their front, albeit opting for a cartoon likeness of his visage on a balloon floating upwards.

While print media's influence was dwindling in the face of stiff competition from online news sites, landing the cover of a glossy magazine still could (and clearly did) inflate a person's ego and influence in 2015. Trump didn't appear to mind that the articles inside those magazines' pages were not flattering as the cover stories only seemed to prove an old adage the once-reality television star understood all too well: All publicity is good publicity.

Earlier, The Huffington Post editors called out Trump's circus act deeming it a "sideshow" that was only worthy of the fluffy entertainment pages, not the serious politics section of the liberal-leaning website.

Despite reams of negative press, The Donald still went from being a silly punchline when he first threw his hat in the ring in June to a serious contender for the job of president of the United States as 2015 wound down. By late December, the billionaire blowhard turned politico had pulled off what would have sounded like a bad joke just a year earlier.

Even less funny was how the businessman pulled off such a feat. He managed to land high-profile covers and the top spot in polls for GOP leader by tapping into an undercurrent of racism still flowing in America.

INTO THE CAPSULE

A Trump doll

Once seen as a joke candidate, by the end of 2015 the billionaire reality-TV star had became the front-runner for the Republican nomination. This did not bode well for the political future.

TAXI INDUSTRY

UBER RIDING HIGH

Sarah Kester
Metro | Toronto

Uber is taking Canadian cities by storm. While people looking for cheap transportation are embracing the app, the taxi industry is not. Cab drivers have held angry protests across the country, calling on city officials to do something.

As the battle is waged on the streets and in council meeting rooms, it's increasingly clear the taxi industry isn't going to win this one. They've already started to adapt — drivers have signed up for Uber to catch more fares and companies are redesigning their apps.

The sharing economy is winning. There may come a time when we don't look to conventional businesses to provide us with our services.

Whether Uber survives, it's clear their momentum has forever changed the taxi industry. Maybe in a few years we'll have several app-based transportation companies.

INTO THE CAPSULE

An old-timey cab

Despite the angry protestations of cab drivers, it's increasingly clear the taxi industry isn't going to beat Uber.

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metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Saturday, December 26, 2015
THE TIME CAPSULE EDITION

WAIT. SHOULD THIS NEWSPAPER ITSELF BE IN A TIME CAPSULE?

With so much free information available online, the survival of print media is in doubt. We tapped two veteran newsmen for their views on the future of news.

> **I think newspaper readership is strongest among people who are soon going to be dead.**

John Gordon Miller

Author, Yesterday's News: Why Canada's Daily Newspapers are Failing Us

Newspapers are built on a business model that's no longer sustainable. It's not that some people don't prefer newspapers. People who work for them think they're irreplaceable. It's that they can't afford to print and distribute them. Newspapers have failed in Canada and the U.S., and I expect that to continue and accelerate. I think there will always be a New York Times print newspaper. But for a Canadian newspaper in any big city, I'd say expecting it to survive 25 years would be optimistic.

There are two problems: Declining readership and declining advertising. When the Internet came along, newspapers really underestimated it. If they all got together, they could have become the biggest classified advertiser on the Internet. But they let it go, and the classifieds that used to be 20 or 30 pages are now one or two. It's all online.

I think newspaper readership is strongest among people who are soon going to be dead. In the next 20 or 25 years, readership is going into the ground. Literally.

Where young people go for their information has been revolutionized by the Internet. They're not going to suddenly develop a newspaper habit. I don't think the newspapers that have migrated to the web are in tune enough with younger readers. So the future of news is really in specialized websites like iPolitics. Among younger people it's "Why should I trust some old white guy to filter my news for me?"

Something very important will be lost. You have to tell the web what you're looking for. But when you're reading the paper, you can turn the page and see something you never thought of being interested in.

We've already seen steps towards newspapers only existing online or printing once a week — those are no longer daily newspapers.

If newspapers continue, they will be free ones like Metro. People always gravitate to something that's free.

Jim Poling

Managing Editor, the Hamilton Spectator

Print news is more responsive, easily accessible and tactile. Opening a newspaper is like smelling fresh air. You turn the page and all your senses come alive. It's a new fount of knowledge with every page turned.

Print is part of us. If all somebody did was read one newspaper front to back every day, they'd be the smartest person in the room.

A newspaper has no "Sorry, this browser's out of date," and no message saying "Sorry, this plug-in's not working." I know when I turn a page, I get a guaranteed, instant surprise.

The majority of the information people want to read is produced in newsrooms. The good content you read on the Internet is stolen and ripped off and repurposed by other entities. I tell young journalists, don't worry about the platform. Chase the content. Produce good information, and the rest will take care of itself.

Print news has a foreseeable shelf life. Is it declining? Perhaps parts of it are. What's really going on is an advertising change. If the advertising model was as robust as it was 20 years ago, we wouldn't be having this discussion.

I hope people want to pay for news. We provide an incredible and important service in addition to entertainment and comfort and knowledge.

The problem is that we've raised a generation of people who have been told they don't have to pay for their media in any form. Our sin, as newspapers, was coming late to that party. The web came along and we threw all our content on it. It was like giving everybody free beer. And after three free beers we said, "Hey, now you've got to pay for your beer." I don't think so.

Many people (in the news business) are struggling. There's no doubt we're going through some structural change. But people will get to a point where they do see value in what the news industry produces. And at least some people will pay for that.

> **The majority of the content people want is made in newsrooms. Produce good information, and the rest will take care of itself.**

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

Into the vault goes the offhand, off-colour comment

Goodbye to the offhand comment, the minor infraction and the ill-conceived joke. We're witnessing the end of the small and inconsequential act.

Consider the fake indigenous headdress beloved by white Halloweeners. In it goes to Metro's time capsule, because you can't get away with it — or anything — anymore.

In our hyper-monitored, hyper-public, hyper-politically correct and hyper-critical world, anything you say or do could potentially go viral. Low-level racism is highlighted, and condemned in a way previously reserved for more overt discrimination. If you dare express a less than perfectly progressive (in the eyes of God knows who) opinion, your words could screw you.

Halloween is the perfect example, and nowhere better made this year than at Yale. Students railed against a teacher who tried to advocate for nuance in costume condemnation, instead of top-down rules for what to wear. The lecturer only had to write one email, and watch the New Yorker, the Atlantic, and the New York Times dissect her words, and then, later, report on her resignation.

The controversy became, as many now do, wrapped up in the idea of safe spaces, a new tool being used to silence some voices, in the service of the new acceptable norms.

Small transgressions are increasingly public. Post a photo on Facebook, or have a friend post a photo on Facebook, and who knows where it might end up. That image of you posing disrespectfully at a national memorial gets uploaded and the next thing you know, your moment of silliness is being recounted as prime example of how online rage can ruin your life, in a book called So You've Been Publicly Shamed.

Drunken antics during a live TV broadcast (a la the FHRITP guys), could echo through social media and cost your job, reputation or self-respect.

On one hand, it's a very good thing to stop reducing whole cultures to imitations of Pocahontas. The small ripples of insensitivity rest on the surface of a much deeper sea of exploitation, inequality and racism we have yet to solve.

But mistakes of the insensitive or racist variety are inevitably made by otherwise decent people — and the constant policing of opinions does not mean unsavoury ones disappear. They only go into hiding, until they find a more acceptable avenue of expression. Like, say, a presidential candidate. Or a migration crisis that can easily be twisted to buoy xenophobia.

Either way, I don't think we can win a fight against the rise of perpetually threatening consequences to everything you say or do. We must now live carefully, and let live.

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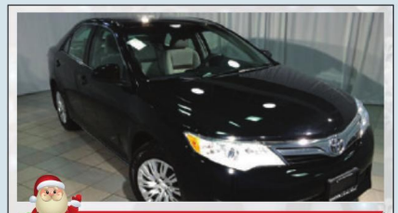

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THE TIME CAPSULE EDITION

THE YEAR WE REALLY DID BREAK

THE GENDER BARRIER

Eddie Redmayne was nominated for a 2016 Golden Globe for his role in The Danish Girl. HANDOUT

GENDER

When it came to transgender rights, 2015 was a game-changer

Devon Scoble
For Metro Canada

Imagine a world divided by strict gender codes, where men and women are born into their socially mandated roles and the binary is policed by gendered pronouns — 'he' and 'she' for some instead of 'they' for all. Imagine a world where sex-specific washrooms are the norm, where trans individuals face harassment just for being themselves.

In the future, this will sound ridiculous, but in 2015, it's reality.

Change will come, perhaps sporadically. This year The New York Times started using the gender-neutral honorific Mx. for individuals who neither identify as male or female, but the move has been largely ignored outside LGBTQ and copyediting circles.

In 2015, The Washington Post also officially accepted 'they' as a singular pronoun.

But some cultural shifts happen faster than we can describe them, and while debates over honorifics and pronouns have failed to capture public interest, transgender issues were front and centre this year when Bruce Jenner became her true self: Caitlyn, a beautiful, media-savvy woman.

By no means the first trans spokesperson, Jenner was the most prominent and her transition sparked an important social conversation.

Trans stories like Jenner's received unprecedented media coverage in 2015. Actor Jeffrey Tambor won a Golden Globe for portraying a trans woman on the television show Transparent, and as the year closed, Eddie Redmayne was nominated for a 2016 Golden Globe for his role in The Danish Girl.

In the film, Redmayne played Lili Elbe, one of the first people to undergo sex reassignment surgery. And Laverne Cox, who played transgender character Sophia Burset on the prison drama Orange Is the New Black, won a Daytime Emmy for her documentary Laverne Cox Presents: The T Word.

These awards and nominations helped promote trans stories, but tellingly, only one of the three actors — Cox — was actually transgender.

Despite the positive trans coverage, the real world wasn't always easy for trans individuals.

In February 2015, Theron Meyer, a 20-year-old Simon Fraser University student who identified as trans feminine, told Metro of the humiliations she faced having to choose between the men's and women's washroom.

"They look at me, they exit the washroom and then look at me again to make sure what my gender is," said Meyer. "That's very ostracizing. I think a lot of people don't experience that, and don't understand the degree to which that is harmful to my livelihood and to other trans people's livelihood."

INTO THE CAPSULE

Gender neutral bathroom sign

Transgender rights were in the spotlight in 2015; from TV shows and movies like Transparent, Orange is the New Black and The Danish Girl, to Caitlyn Jenner's sit-down interview with Diane Sawyer and Aydian Dowling almost winning Men's Health 2015's Ultimate Guy Search. But for all the glitz, it was a simple sign — seen in everyday life — that symbolized the change most of all.

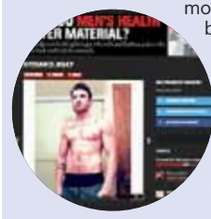
ALTERNATE SUBMISSIONS

3 TRANSGENDER TRAILBLAZERS OF 2015

Harriette Cunningham

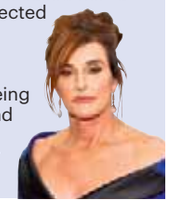
Harriette Cunningham's birth certificate read male, but Cunningham never doubted it was wrong. In 2015, the 12-year-old from Comox Valley, B.C. was fighting to have gender designations removed from official documents in British Columbia.

Aydian Dowling



Aydian Dowling didn't win the Men's Health 2015 "Ultimate Guy Search," but the trans activist, model and bodybuilder did win the magazine's readers' poll, raising trans awareness – and pulses – around the world.

Caitlyn Jenner



Criticized for her wealth, privilege and surprisingly traditional politics, Jenner was still instrumental in bringing transgender issues to a larger audience. In 2015, Metro columnist Emma Teitel called her "a walking, collagen-injected catch-22... damned for speaking out and damned for keeping quiet; damned for being an inferior activist and damned for winning awards based on her activism."

PrEP'D FOR AN HIV-FREE FUTURE

Here are some of the landmark moments in the Canadian history of one of humanity's most devastating diseases. Along with some more recent developments, we speculate what might happen in the yet-unwritten history of HIV/AIDS. BY DEVON SCOBLE/FOR METRO CANADA

INTO THE CAPSULE

PrEP: Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis

PrEP, which recent research has been shown to prevent HIV transmission in 90 per cent of cases, got its first Metro Canada coverage in the final months of 2014.

A staff writer described the Truvada brand of PrEP as both "a revolution in protection against HIV" and a "polarizing" treatment.

By 2015, many were calling on Health Canada to fast-track the drug's approval as a preventative treatment.

"It would be one step toward making PrEP more accessible to people who are at risk of HIV," Len Tooley, team coordinator at the HIV Prevention Lab of Ryerson University, told Metro.

Another healthcare advocate quoted by Metro called it a "public health disaster in the making," fearing PrEP would lead at-risk groups to abandon protected sex. (In 2015, abstinence was the only surefire way to avoid the disease, but protected intercourse was a second-best — and much more popular — alternative).

DEVON SCOBIE/FOR METRO

A TIMELINE OF HIV AND AIDS IN CANADA

1980

1982 Canada experiences its first death from what will soon be known as AIDS

1983 Researchers discover that women can contract the disease previously believed to be a gay men's syndrome, and that AIDS is caused by the retrovirus HIV

1987 Gaetan Dugas, a gay Canadian flight attendant who died in 1984, is mistakenly identified as Patient Zero and vilified in the international press. The same year, the first antiretroviral drug becomes available

1991 The red ribbon becomes the international symbol of AIDS awareness

1998 The Supreme Court of Canada rules that people living with HIV must disclose their status to sexual partners

2003 A WHO report names AIDS the number one infectious cause of adult death in the world

2005 Health Canada approves a rapid HIV test that works in minutes (previously, results took several days)

2011 Metro reports that researchers at Western University will begin human clinical trials of an HIV vaccine developed by Dr. Chil-Yong Kang, with support from Sumagen Canada

2012 UNAIDS estimates 36 million people have died from AIDS-related causes to-date

2015 Scruff, a popular gay hookup app, allows users to list PrEP use on the safe-sex filter of their dating profiles

2016

2017 PrEP, which has previously been available as an HIV treatment, gets Health Canada approval as a preventative for HIV-negative people at high risk of contracting the virus

2025 The HIV vaccine, or HIVV gets FDA and Health Canada approval

2030 For the first time since 1982, Canada reports zero new cases of HIV

2032 With "BillPhil" funding from several billionaire philanthropists, including the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, global HIVV coverage begins

2040 The WHO reports zero new cases of HIV worldwide

2040

LANGUAGE

Today's texts: Glossary for aliens and anthropologists

Every year, new words and phrases creep into our lexicon and while some stick around, many fade from everyday use, becoming anachronistic relics occasionally tossed around by an aging uncle trying to hold onto his high school football glory days.

Here, we preserve the words and phrases of 2015 as a guide for future anthropologists attempting to decipher reddits, Facebook posts and tweets.

Because it's 2015: Credited to Justin Trudeau, progressive Prime Minister and moonlighting Vogue model. Used as a retort to people who question the reasons for mandated gender and racial equality in cabinet appointments.

Netflix and chill: People of the future who don't know what Netflix is: It's a ubiquitous video streaming service that ushered in the demise of brick and mortar video stores. When put together with 'and chill,' it becomes a polite guise for 'hey come over to my house so we can have sex.'

On fleek: It could be argued 'on fleek' is a phrase of 2014, but people of Instagram have spent most of 2015 trying to move the word to IRL. Can we just accept it's not happening and move on? Oh yes, the definition: It's the equivalent of 'on point' — specifically in the beauty realm — most likely used to describe eyebrows. As in "eyebrows on fleek."

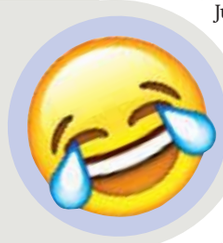
Yaaas: A substitution word for 'yes' just won't do to convey your excitement about a person, place or thing. Yaaas first appeared on the radar two years ago in a video clip from the Instagram account of Johnny Versayce as he used it to shout his approval to one fierce looking Lady Gaga as she strutted down a red carpet. It's now used across the internet to show excited approval.

LIZ BROWN/METRO CANADA

INTO THE CAPSULE

"Face with tears of joy" emoji

For the first time, the Oxford Dictionary's Word of the Year in 2015 was not a word, but an emoji instead. Oxford University Press worked with mobile technology business SwiftKey to select the most popular emoji used around the world in 2015. AFP



TIME CAPSULE

Artifact: Dulse — the seaweed that tastes exactly like bacon.

Why it belongs here: Researchers at Oregon State University had your back in 2015, developing a strain of dulse that tastes like bacon when cooked. "There hasn't been a lot of interest in using it in a fresh form," lead researcher Chris Langdon said. "When you fry it... it tastes like bacon."

AFP

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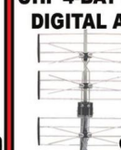

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THE LAST DAYS OF LIVING LARGE

This rendering shows the type of micro suites Reliance Properties is proposing for a project in Vancouver. RELIANCE PROPERTIES HANDOUT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

LIVING

Detached homes face extinction

Devon Scoble
For Metro Canada

Dec 26, 2015, 8 p.m.: The Lees, a typical Canadian family, are relaxing in their living room. Here's mom, Jennifer, aged 46, comfy in yoga pants and a loose cardigan, reading a magazine made with slick sheets of glossy paper. There's dad, Christopher, 45 years old, beard shot with grey, belly gently straining the buttons of his soft plaid shirt. He grips a plastic cylinder covered with buttons; every so often his thumb jabs one, changing the images on the flatscreen across the room.

Emily, their 13-year-old daughter sits on an ottoman, leggings tucked beneath her, manicured fingers tapping her smartphone. Occasionally she directs the phone's camera towards her face, pushes her lips out like a duck's beak and angles her chin for a leaner profile. Her efforts to capture the perfect selfie are continually threatened by her younger brother, Ethan, 10, who will sacrifice points on his iPad game if it means annoying his sister with a choice photobomb.

It's a holiday, and this is family time. Swaths of empty space stretch between each Lee in this 300-square-foot room designed for the sole purpose of media consumption, but they are comfortable. At this moment, they have no idea theirs will be the last generation to inhabit such vast living spaces, and little sense of the consequences.

They understand the financial costs, of course. Rising real estate prices are a hot topic in 2015, and Jen and Chris worry their children will never afford homes of their own. Occupy, COP21, KonMari, Precarity Protests: these things are happening around them, or about to happen. The portrait of their era is taking shape, but the paint's still wet and it's hard to see the whole picture.

They are both right and wrong about the kids. Emily and Ethan won't buy houses like the one they grew up in, but they will have homes, albeit much smaller ones. Early models are already popping up: they call them tiny homes, micro-condos and laneway houses. Critics worry their construction will force the needy into cramped and dangerous domiciles; early adopters praise their efficient and environmentally responsible design. In 2015, they are pet projects for environmentalists, urban design enthusiasts and off-the-grid types. The social forces that will make them necessary are still developing; the advances that will make them truly comfortable await invention.

For now, 300 square feet of living room feels reasonable, and the Lees are managing just fine. Jennifer's magazine brims with tips on achieving work-life balance, an obsession of the time. One article suggests transparent storage bins for excess goods; another describes the supplies she'll need to stock a personal yoga room.

In the corner, a plastic Christmas tree sparkles with LED lights (Chris still can't get over how cool they are compared to the hot electric bulbs of his youth). At its base a pile of freshly opened presents awaits its fate. Jen sets the magazine down, picks up her phone, and begins tapping out four related lists: Keep, Sell, Return and Donate.

Over the ensuing days, weeks and years, the Lees will spend countless hours buying, returning, cleaning, organizing and re-organizing their things; despite the enormity of their home, they will each, at some point, complain that it is too small.

INTO THE CAPSULE

A single-family, detached home

In 2015, Metro published dozens of stories on a growing trend: shrinking homes. Micro condos, laneway houses and tiny homes were not the norm in 2015 — an October story estimated only one per cent of new homes measured less than 1,000 square feet. But rising real estate costs, urban land shortages (particularly in Vancouver) and a push towards sustainable building practices added interest and urgency to these stories as Canadians began seriously considering a downsized future.

SPOTLIGHT ON CHILDCARE

The nanny steps out of the nursery and into the spotlight

At one point it was something of a Hollywood cliché: husbands sneaking off to engage in dalliances with their families' nannies, endangering their marriages in the process.

But it seemed that topic had quieted in recent years, with domestic staff quietly going about their often invisible business. But two high-profile celebrity breakups this summer brought the topic back to the foreground of the pop culture landscape.

First, in late June, Ben Affleck and Jennifer Garner announced they were ending their 10-year marriage, and rumors quickly began circulating that Affleck was dating the couple's nanny, Christine Ouzounian. And while Affleck and Garner dealt with the fallout of their breakup, Ouzounian handily turned the moment to her advantage, keeping her chin up and hiring a publicist.

And then in August, Gwen Stefani and Gavin Rossdale announced a divorce of their very own, with further speculation that the 1990s rock star had been caught having some play-dates of his own with their nanny — though Mindy Mann's name was dragged through the mud, the allegations were never confirmed.

In a much less salacious story closer to home — one involving the use of taxpayer funds — new Canadian prime minister Justin Trudeau defended his move to task two nannies with the care of this three young children, despite outcries about the use of the public purse.

"Obviously it will come as no surprise to people that we have a different family situation with three small children than the Harpers did," Trudeau said, referring to former prime minister Stephern Harper, during a 2015 news conference shortly after taking office. "That means we will operate within the same family budget that the previous prime minister had, but we will shuffle it around so that it fits better our priorities."

What's most fascinating about all of this, especially in the case of Ouzounian, is how this job is finally getting such mainstream recognition, putting childcare work in the spotlight when the role had previously been kept to the side. With the exception of the brief tabloid fascination with the "manny" a decade ago, it's a task predominantly handled by an often invisible workforce made up of women, minorities and immigrants. What they'll do with this media moment is yet to be seen — they can't all be as media-savvy as Ouzounian — but it is refreshing to see some recognition coming their way.

NED EHRBAR/METRO HOLLYWOOD

INTO THE CAPSULE

Christine Ouzounian, the celebrity nanny

The rich have always had nannies to help look after the kids, and it's not unheard of for husbands to get caught having the au pair look after them a bit as well — just ask Jude Law. But in 2015, it felt like the nanny had something of a moment.

THE LAST NAKED PLAYBOY ISSUE

PAPER PORN

Readers really will buy mag for articles now

Brian Gasparek
For Metro Canada

The fleshy, vixen-graced cover of the Jan/Feb 2016 edition of Playbook is the very last issue of the magazine to ever feature a naked woman in its pages. And that last naked woman happens to be the most popular naked woman in the history of printed pornography.

It may be mind-boggling to think we lived in an age where our carnal urge to look at sex and nudity couldn't be satisfied by the click of a mouse or a tap of a tablet at any time during the day. Prior to the endless assortment of free porn online, one of the only ways that the consumers of yesteryears could get their hands on pornography was to buy it in magazine form at convenience stores or through snail-mail subscriptions. How weird is it that porn once cost money and you had to exert some effort to get it?

The godfather of porno mags was Playboy. Dating back to 1953, Playboy was the first publication of its kind to release a monthly magazine filled with naked women, sandwiched between a variety of articles that men would swear up and down was their reason for buying it.

Up until the end of this year, Playboy was the marquee porno mag to satisfy all skin-gawking urges. It maintained a level of class and quality (for porn) over its copycat competition, like Penthouse. At its peak point of success, Playboy had 5.6 million monthly readers... but free internet porn killed its reign.

The high-speed revolution is responsible for bringing us the wealth of information — and instantly accessible porno — that we're familiar with today. Streaming sites and instant downloads have squashed the need for anybody to ever spend money on a magazine full of naked women again. Why would we?

This fall, Playboy waved its white flag and declared that it was officially out of the nudie game. It announced that starting in 2016, the magazine would focus on quality written content to win over new readers. But not before this one last historic naked issue.

For its final cover girl, Playboy paid tribute to its most iconic nude model of all time, Canadian actress Pamela Anderson. Anderson helped make the magazine a gargantuan success in four different decades, allowing it to be the official outlet to share her once highly desired body with the world.

She appeared naked in Playboy a record-setting 15 times, 14 of which she also graced the cover. But those days are now gone forever.

We thought it was important to share this naked artifact in our time capsule because it not only represents how 2015 marked the end of Playboy's reign as the godfather of porn, it also witnessed the demise of an archaic medium in the skin industry.

So long porno-Playboy!

INTO THE CAPSULE

Jan/Feb 2016 Playboy Magazine

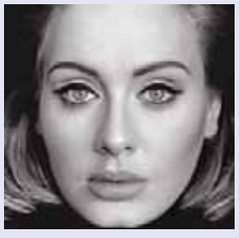
The magazine that helped usher in the sexual revolution in the 1950s and '60s by bringing nudity into living rooms, announced in 2015 that it will no longer run photos of completely naked women. Released on Dec. 1, 2015, this final edition featured Canadian actress Pamela Anderson.

WORDS FOR THE FUTURE

This fall, Playboy declared that it was officially out of the nudie game.

This image released by Playboy shows Marilyn Monroe on the December 1953 debut issue of the gentleman's magazine. Playboy's print edition will still feature women in provocative poses, but they will no longer be fully nude. HANDOUT

TIME CAPSULE



Artifact: Adele's 25 album

Why it belongs here:

Hello indeed, Adele! The soulful Brit debuted her long-awaited album, 25, and it gives a huge year-end boost to the struggling music industry. In a time of illegal downloads and pirated music, the album sold a whopping 5 million copies in just three weeks.

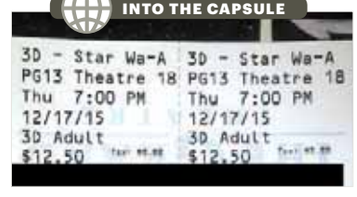
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

With a female lead and diverse cast, The Force Awakens sets new rules for smash hits. HANDOUT

STAR WARS

Blockbuster more than moneymaker

INTO THE CAPSULE



The much anticipated seventh installment of the star wars trilogy blasted its way into theatres in December 2015, setting box office records in Canada and around the world. Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures Canada said the newest movie in the epic space drama reached $18.6 million in ticket during its opening weekend.

Studio estimates on Dec. 20, 2015, suggested the film brought in a galactic $238 million over the weekend, making it the biggest North American debut of all time, and destroy the previous opening record set by Jurassic World, which drew $208.8 million in the summer of 2015.

What's more, some were suggesting the film, directed by J.J. Abram, would usher a change in the way blockbuster movies are cast in Hollywood, because of Star Wars female lead and the diversity of its cast.

METRO/CANADIAN PRESS

GOOD RIDDANCE, CABLE BILLS

CRTC

'Pick and pay' is the new way to watch television

Brian Gasparek
For Metro Canada

As we get closer to a future that features every TV show, movie or special that we're interested in watching being instantly accessible on cheap streaming services like Netflix, iTunes, Amazon and Shomi, it's baffling to think about the way we've been forced to consume television for all of these years, and the costs we've been charged for it.

Until 2015, we've been watching TV by renting digital cable boxes and ordering expensive channel packages through one of a few giant Canadian cable providers. These providers have had complete control over the package costs and what channels are included in each of them.

Although the providers have been wise to the specific channels that we love to watch the most, they haven't let us pay for just those alone. Instead, they've taken our beloved channels, combined them with a bunch of less desirable ones, and have been making us pay a bundled rate for everything together.

If we don't buy the bundle, we can't have the channels.

The worst part is that several of our favourite channels have been featured in separate bundles and, if we want access, we have to buy them all.

Many of us have been paying for more than 500 channels in our homes, when we really watch only a dozen of them regularly.

But thanks to our federal broadcast regulator, the CRTC, the end of this ridiculousness was announced this year.

After fielding endless complaints from disgruntled couch potatoes who were sick of paying for unwanted content, as well as becoming aware of the popularity of cheaper TV options like online streaming, the CRTC laid the smackdown on our cable providers' monopoly this past spring.

The CRTC told our providers that starting in 2016, consumers will be given the right to "pick and pay" for only the channels that we actually want to watch.

Once we've purchased a cheap, price-regulated basic cable package from the providers, we will be able to pay for channels individually, like a digital à la carte menu. The old channel bundles will still be an option, but only if we feel like shelling out for them. It's a truly glorious time, from the consumer's perspective.

We chose to include this cable bill inside our time capsule because it represents how 2015 finally changed the archaic Canadian cable industry as well as the cost of TV watching forever.

In the past people would pay for 500 channels but watch only a few. This will no longer be the case. ISTOCK

INTO THE CAPSULE

A cable bill

This year, the CRTC decided that Canadian consumers will no longer have to pay for expensive traditional cable packages and will now have the right to "pick and pay" for only the individual channels that they want to purchase, beginning in 2016.

ALTERNATIVE SPECIMEN

Coaxial Cable

A growing number of Canadians were ditching their traditional television subscriptions, according to a CBC research study. The May 2015 report said more than half of Canadians currently without cable television have "cut the cord."

Why important

"With the prevalence of TV content on the Internet and Netflix, Canadians are seeing less need to have a TV subscription," the report said. Sixteen per cent of Canadians don't pay for a traditional TV service, up from 12 per cent three years ago, the report said. "We consider it a big jump," said Mark Allen, senior director of corporate research at CBC/Radio-Canada in Ottawa.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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metro SPORTS
Your essential daily news
Saturday, December 26, 2015

AFTER YEARS OF FUTILITY

BLUE JAYS BRING IT HOME

BASEBALL

Team boasts major-league best 891 runs

Vincent Man
Metro | Toronto

The big, ugly monkey that had made its home on the back of the Toronto Blue Jays for the last 22 years has vanished.

And the team's punishing bats can be thanked for that.

Well aware that it had the dubious distinction of the team with the longest absence from the playoffs, the franchise desperately searched for a way in for the first time since 1993.

In reality, the Blue Jays' magical 2015 season began the previous November. First, general manager Alex Anthopoulos paid above market value to sign catcher Russell Martin. He followed that up by dealing fan favourite Brett Lawrie and acquiring all-star third baseman Josh Donaldson from the Oakland Athletics – a swap that signalled he had his eyes squarely on the post-season.

Anthopoulos was not done there, however. With the team not quite over the hump, the GM orchestrated a number of game-changing trades in July. In the days leading up to the trade deadline, the team acquired slugging shortstop Troy Tulowitzki, veteran reliever LaTroy Hawkins, speedy outfield Ben Revere, setup man Mark Lowe and, the pièce de résistance, former Cy Young award-winner David Price.

The Blue Jays cleared their farm system of their prized pitching prospects but they also pieced together an all-star cast.

Sensing the shift from playing for the future to playing for today, fans began to support the Jays in full force. Rogers Centre, which had seemingly been only half full since the team's glory years, instantly boasted sold-out crowds. And paying customers were not disappointed.

The Jays, who were hovering around the .500 mark at the time of the blockbusters, quickly climbed the standings with opposing pitching staffs left licking their wounds. The batting lineup anchored by Donaldson, Jose Bautista and Edwin Encarnacion finished the season with a major-league best 891 runs.

Toronto's pitching also held its own. Price went 9-1, while starter Marco Estrada (13-8, 3.13 ERA) and 20-year-old closer Roberto Osuna (20 saves) emerged as key arms.

The Jays won the AL East with a 93-69 record and defeated the Texas Rangers in the ALDS – but not before an epic comeback. They lost the first two games in the series, and then forced a deciding fifth game after a pair of their own wins.

The emotionally-charged Game 5 saw the Jays trail 3-2 in the seventh inning when Bautista belted a three-run home run, followed by a bat flip of the tape-measure variety. They won the game 6-3.

The Blue Jays ran out of magic in the ALCS when they were beaten in six games by the Kansas City Royals, the eventual World Series champs.

It could be argued the Jays are in position to repeat their winning ways in 2016 with many key players expected to return. At the very least, they will have a large following – both new and old.

With everyone invested in this team having experienced playoff baseball, failure is no longer an option and winning a championship is surely the next step in the master plan.

Jays fever took a hold of fans as the team advanced to the playoffs for the first time since 1993. STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

INTO THE CAPSULE

Jose Bautista's bat

After the Jays slugging right-fielder hit his instantly iconic home run in Game 5 of the 2015 ALDS, he tossed his bat with a mixture of fury and pure joy. The "bat flip" was the moment that underscored 2015, the year the Jays began to act like winners.

OFF-SEASON MOVES

- Mark Shapiro was hired to replace the retiring Paul Beeston as the team's president and CEO.
- Soon after, Anthopoulos declined a contract offer to stay on as GM. The Jays eventually hired Ross Atkins.
- The Boston Red Sox signed David Price to a seven-year, $217-million deal after Toronto failed to make a contract offer.

PAN AM GAMES

CITY PROVES WORTHY STAGE

It's hard to believe now, but before the cauldron was lit there was anxiety surrounding the Pan Am Games.

There were traffic and transit concerns. The price tag seemed extraneous for what many considered a B-level event. Whispers of low ticket sales and hotel reservations hinted at financial doom and gloom.

In the years leading, the Pan Am-Parapan Am Games were on the periphery of public awareness. The brand wasn't widely loved or even well-known in Canada; top athletes from around the Americas mostly sat out.

But even though they didn't capture the imagination of a country or arguably even a city, it's hard to dump on the Games.

Getting tens of thousands of volunteers – and Kanye! – to show up, avoiding total chaos and keeping Toronto secure while hosting tens of thousands should be considered a success.

Plus, Canada achieved its goal of finishing second in the medal standings, nabbing 217. Only the U.S. won more with 265.

At the Parapans our 168 podium appearances were second only to Brazil's 257. Many of us were introduced to rising stars like sprinter Andre De Grasse, gymnast Ellie Black and point guard Jamal Murray.

In the afterglow, for a few weeks at least, Toronto thought that maybe, just maybe, it could host the Big One.

But cooler heads prevailed and Toronto's 2024 Olympic bid was taken off the table. And of course there are still reasons to gripe.

The Pan/Parapan Ams only made back $175 million on the $2.423 billion invested. Fifty-seven organizing officials sharing a $5.7-million bonus just for staying under budget still chafes.

But in coming years, the sporting impact will come back into focus. Pan Am standouts will win medals at the 2016 Olympics in Rio. If Canada improves on the 18 medals it won at the 2012 Olympics, some revisionists will look back at TO2015 more fondly.

So the Pan/Parapan Am Games' real legacy will rest in the athletes of the near and farther future, and Toronto showed that it is capable of hosting THE Games. But just because you can doesn't necessarily mean you should. LAURIE WILSON/METRO

INTO THE CAPSULE

Andre DeGrasse's gold medal

Canadian athletes, like the winner of the 100-metre dash, served notice that a new generation of medal contenders are on the horizon just in time for Rio. But, despite the perceived success of the Pan Am Games, Toronto put aside its Olympic hosting dreams.

RECIPE Leftover Turkey Pot Pies

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

Use up your leftover turkey and make an easy dinner with a little store-bought puff pastry.

Ready in
Prep time: 60 minutes
Serves 6

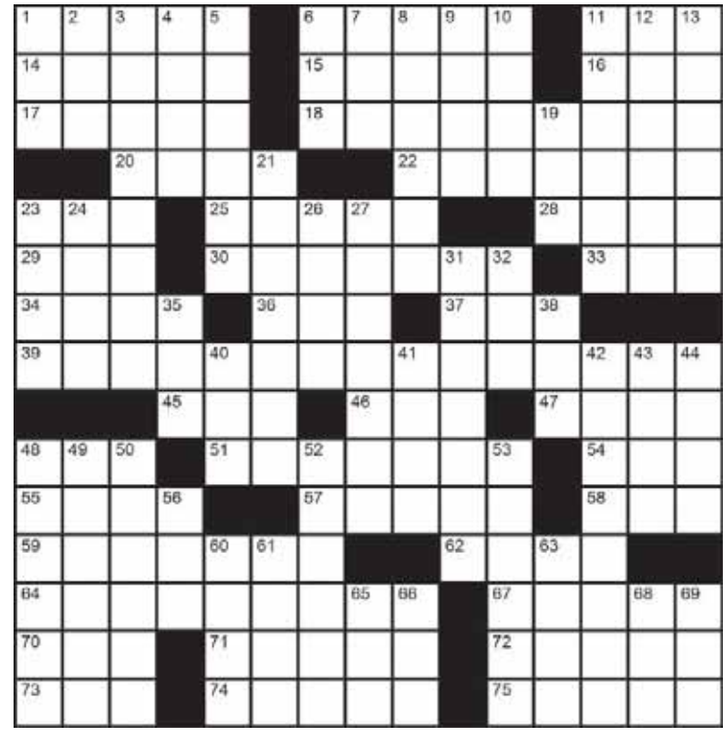
Ingredients
- 4 Tbsp butter
- 1 1/2 lbs cremini mushrooms, sliced
- 2 stalks celery, sliced
- 2 cups leftover turkey, cubed
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp fresh thyme
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 cup low sodium vegetable broth
- 1/2 cup light cream
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 package frozen puff pastry (397 grams)
- 1 egg

Directions
1. Preheat the oven to 400 F.
2. In a large pot or Dutch oven, melt butter over medium heat. Add onion, garlic, mushrooms, celery, thyme and pepper and cook 12 to 15 minutes until vegetables soften. Add cooked turkey and stir.
3. Sprinkle flour over and stir. Let cook for a minute or two to get rid of the raw flour taste. Stir in the stock, cream and frozen peas. Simmer for a couple minutes. Taste to check seasoning.
4. On a lightly floured countertop, roll out your puff pastry until it is 1/4-inch thick. Cut into squares that will cover your ramekins and flop over the edges a bit.
5. Ladle vegetable mixture into individual ramekins. Place a little pastry lid over each. Whisk an egg with just a bit of water in a small bowl. Brush the top of each pie with the egg wash. Take a knife and score slits into the pastry tops. Place the ramekins on a cookie sheet and bake for 25 to 30 minutes until the crusts are golden. Allow to rest and cool for at least 15 minutes before serving. They will be hot, hot, hot.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. "Deck the Halls": "_ the ancient Yule tide carol..."
6. _ _ charge (Held the helm)
11. "_ Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas"
14. Hawk's habitation, variantly
15. Composed
16. Edinburgh 'uh-uh'
17. Was inclined, like Pisa
18. Christmas dessert
20. Exam
22. Exclaimed "Oh, fiddlesticks!"
23. Couple
25. Purpose
28. Better half
29. "Happy Xmas (_ Is Over)"
30. Temples of tiers
33. Said 'hello' like Rocky
34. Solo song
36. Semi
37. Eggs come in one [abbr.]
39. Extra little Christmas gift: 2 wds.
45. Suffix with 'Velvet'
46. 'L' of L.A.
47. Ms. Remini
48. Not her
51. Garden structures for shade
54. Ms. Gabor, when doubled
55. Not worth _ _ (Without value)
57. Put forth
58. Rock gr., with Led
59. Most nervous
62. Cab
64. "O Little Town of _"
67. Decrease
70. Goose: French
71. Turn while driving
72. Banish
73. Cadillac's lettered sedan
74. Noblemen
75. Tenet

DOWN
1. Puny phone
2. Particular loaf
3. 1734: "Christmas _" by Johann Sebastian Bach
4. Queue
5. Abates, perhaps as a Winter storm: 2 wds.
6. Panda logo org.
7. ETA part, briefly
8. _ up, as cars
9. "How sweet _ _!" - Jackie Gleason
10. Amsterdam's locale, briefly
11. Sort of: 3 wds.
12. Bring along: 2 wds.
13. Ranked, as top tennis players
19. Picture-taker, briefly
21. Russian empress
23. "'_ the night before Christmas..."
24. Tip to 'hog' (Wild swine)
26. Opposin'
27. Skier's eyes protection
31. Partakes in charades: 2 wds.
32. After-R trio
35. Champion
38. Baltimore Ravens org.
40. Beer barrel
41. Boo-hoos
42. Charles Dickens: A Christmas Carol character
43. Simplicity
44. Queen's 'Bohemian', e.g.
48. Storage for a derby or fedora
49. Santa's sleigh spotter's shout!: 3 wds.
50. Del _ (Belonging to a famous canned fruit brand)
52. Plectrum-played instrument
53. Closed, as the Christmas card envelope
56. Informally seat theatre-goers
60. Additional
61. _ _ good example
63. Hugs and kisses on a greeting card
65. Moray _
66. Santa's wife, _. Claus
68. Tree type
69. Actor Stephen

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
You may have decided that you no longer want to work with someone, but how do you make the break? Don't worry about hurting their feelings — you must be ruthless and leave them in no doubt that it's over.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Don't let your emotions take control. Keep personal feelings under wraps and focus only on facts. What happens will require a resolute response.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
If you're too eager to make up your mind about something (or someone), you may have to change it later. Facts may seem obvious but with Uranus strong in your chart things are not as simple as they seem.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Check the small print, twice, before agreeing to anything that might cost you money if you get it wrong. You cannot be too careful when dealing with people this weekend.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You are not the type to get emotional but don't be so unresponsive today. If you come across as cold and uncaring it will make others less likely to trust you and confide in you.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
As usual you are worrying too much and as usual you have nothing to fear. Jupiter in your sign promises that if you make an effort you can achieve great things, but first you have got to believe in yourself.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Don't worry if you discover that someone you thought was a friend has been talking behind your back. Ignore what others may or may not be saying. There is absolutely nothing they can do to stop you.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Something will happen that causes you to revise some of your most deeply held convictions. It takes a lot for you to admit that you are wrong but the evidence will be so overwhelming that you have no choice.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Control your temper. If you let your anger show it could rebound in unexpected way. And don't let authority figures know what you think of them!

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
If something is taken from you don't get upset about it. In a matter of days you'll forget about your loss as new and more interesting playthings come into your life. Change is good.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Don't be disappointed if something or someone stops you from moving in the direction you chose. Instead, look at other possibilities and be ready to take advantage of new opportunities.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Instead of focusing so much on the details, make a conscious effort to look at the bigger picture. Without it there is a danger you will lose perspective and drift off course.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

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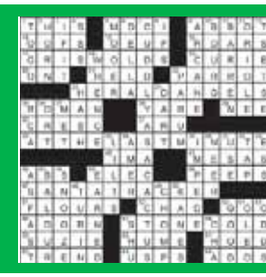

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 26 AND SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2015

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EXCEPT BRAMPTON BRAMALEA CITY CENTRE, BURLINGTON MAPLEVIEW CENTRE, HAMILTON LIMERIDGE MALL, OTTAWA BAYSHORE CENTRE, TORONTO QUEEN STREET, TORONTO SHERWAY GARDENS, TORONTO YORKDALE, WATERLOO CONESTOGA MALL AND WINDSOR DEVONSHIRE MALL OPEN AT 7 A.M. CHECK THEBAY.COM FOR STORE HOURS.

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Women's fashion by DESIGN LAB, DEX, I.N.C INTERNATIONAL CONCEPTS, CALVIN KLEIN Sportswear, LORD & TAYLOR and more

See below for exclusions.

60% OFF

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In our sleepwear departments. See below for exclusions.

50% OFF

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In our accessories department. See below for exclusions.

UP TO 50% OFF

Women's rain and winter boots by LONDON FOG, COUGAR, PAJAR and more

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Offer ends Monday, December 28, 2015.

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DOUBLE BONUS
STAUB 10" round cast iron grill pan and 4-piece contemporary steak knife set.
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HUDSON'S BAY

Savings for all offers are off our regular prices, unless otherwise specified. **Women's clearance fashion:** Includes dresses and swimwear in our dress and swimwear departments; Excludes items in our suit and outerwear departments, The Room, Topshop, Pink Tartan, Toni Plus, Reiss, Women's Armani Jeans, The Kooples, Sandro/Maje, BCBGMAXAZRIA, Rudsak, Evans, NYDJ, Diesel and Nygard Slims. **Women's clearance footwear** excludes Dept 146 Designer collections, Dept 875 White Space, Athletic Dept 276, Women's rain and winter boots Dept 837 and 839, Cole Haan, Frye and UGG Australia. **Women's clearance handbags and wallets** exclude Coach, Marc By Marc Jacobs and Kate Spade New York. **Clearance sterling silver and fashion jewellery** excludes Coach. **Men's clearance clothing and footwear** excludes West End Shop, Boutique Le President and Topman. **Women's fashion:** Selection varies by store; Excludes New Spring Arrivals; Select styles available in Petite and Plus Sizes. **Dex** excludes suits in our suit department. **Design Lab, I.N.C International Concepts, I.N.C International Concepts Plus Size, Calvin Klein Sportswear and Calvin Klein Sportswear Plus Size** exclude items with 99¢ price endings. **Lord & Taylor fashion** excludes Cashmere, Sweaters Reg. $79 to $80, Plus Size Sweaters Reg. $89 and items with 99¢ price endings. **Men's sleepwear and robes** exclude Calvin Klein, Hugo Boss and items with 99¢ price endings. **Women's sleepwear and robes** exclude New Spring Arrivals, Lord & Taylor Cashmere Robe VPN#F15-172-507, Lord & Taylor Spa Terry Robe VPN#F15-170-720 and items with 99¢ price endings. **Women's cold-weather accessories** exclude Adrienne Landau, Burberry, Coach, Diane Von Furstenberg, Kate Spade New York, Linda Richards, Lord & Taylor Cashmere, Marc By Marc Jacobs, Michael Michael Kors, Pajar, UGG Australia and items with 99¢ price endings. **Women's rain and winter boots** exclude Cougar styles Cheyenne and 39068 Original. **Women's UGG Australia footwear** excludes clearance items. **Men's casual outerwear** in our men's outerwear department excludes Helly Hansen, Tahari, Under Armour, Vince Camuto, Michael Kors, Selected, Gyde, Reebok, Adidas, Comstock & Co. and items with 99¢ price endings. **Kids' and babies' outerwear** excludes Nautica, Under Armour, K-Way, Moose Knuckles, ADD, Ralph Lauren Childrenswear and items with 99¢ price endings.